

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06362 01 OF 02 311704Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----061573 311718Z /45  
O 311601Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9845  
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 06362

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: UR, US, YO  
SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR MET ON MARCH 31 WITH YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR SMOLE WHO PROVIDED SUMMARY OF VISIT OF YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER MINIC. ACCORDING TO SMOLE, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS TO REPORT ON CONVERSATIONS DURING TITO VISIT TO U.S. TITO'S LETTER TO BREZHNEV, MOREOVER, DEALT WITH HIS IMPRESSIONS (FAVORABLE) OF THE PRESIDENT AND OF THE MOOD IN THE U.S. SOVIET RESPONSE WAS NOT NEGATIVE, ALTHOUGH BREZHNEV CLAIMED THAT SOVIETS ARE PUZZLED BY ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND COMPLAINED ABOUT THE "ZIG-ZAG NATURE" OF U.S. POLICY. SMOLE SAID THAT SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS WERE NOT DISCUSSED AND THAT TITO WILL BE REPORTING DIRECTLY TO THE PRESIDENT ON THE MINIC VISIT. END SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET-U.S. RELATIONS. ACCORDING TO SMOLE, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE MINIC VISIT WAS TO BRIEF THE SOVIETS ON CONVERSATIONS DURING TITO'S VISIT TO THE U.S. AND TO GIVE THE SOVIETS THE YUGOSLAV IMPRESSION OF THE MOOD IN WASHINGTON AND OF THE PRESIDENT. ALSO, TITO'S LETTER DELIVERED BY MINIC TO BREZHNEV PROVIDED TITO'S PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPRESSIONS OF THE PRESIDENT AND OF THE U.S. BOTH THE LETTER AND MINIC'S PRESENTATION WERE POSITIVE ON THE PRESIDENT AND THE YUGOSLAVS ASSURED THE SOVIETS THAT THE PRESIDENT IS DEDICATED TO THE PERPETUATION OF DETENTE AND TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF SOVIET-U.S. RELATIONS.

2. SMOLE SAID THAT BREZHNEV WAS "ON THE WHOLE NOT NEGA-

TIVE" ON THE SUBJECT OF THE U.S., FROM WHICH THE YUGOSLAVS DREW SOME ENCOURAGEMENT. ON A SUMMIT, BREZHNEV REPEATED THE SOVIET POSITION THAT IT MUST BE WELL-PREPARED AND THAT IT MUST PRODUCE A POSITIVE POLITICAL RESULT BUT LISTENED CAREFULLY TO MINIC'S DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESIDENT'S DESIRE FOR A MEETING. ON THE PRESIDENT, BREZHNEV SAID THE SOVIETS ARE PUZZLED CONCERNING HIS TRUE POSTURE AND COMPLAINED OF THE "ZIG-ZAG NATURE" OF U.S. POLICIES AND STATEMENTS. THE SOVIETS, MOREOVER, TOLD MINIC THAT THEY ARE DISTURBED BY SEVERAL ASPECTS OF U.S. POLICY, NOTABLY SALT, THE CONDUCT OF THE U.S. DELEGATION AT THE BELGRADE CSCE REVIEW SESSION (WHICH SOVIETS DESCRIBED AS "FLAGRANT" INTERFERENCE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS), AND EFFORTS IN THE U.S. TO ESTABLISH LINKAGE BETWEEN SALT AND THE HORN OF AFRICA. BREZHNEV WAS PARTICULARLY UNHAPPY WITH THE WAKE FOREST SPEECH, DESCRIBING IT AS A SURRENDER TO THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND TO THE ENEMIES OF DETENTE. MINIC TOLD BREZHNEV THAT THIS ASSESSMENT OF THE PRESIDENT MADE IT ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT THAT HE (BREZHNEV) MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT. SMOLE ADDED THAT HE HAD SPOKEN THIS MORNING WITH CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT MEMBER RUSAKOV, TELLING HIM THAT HE WAS TO MEET WITH THE U.S. AMBASSADOR. RUSAKOV TOLD SMOLE TO CONVEY THE MESSAGE THAT THE POLITBURO AND THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE STRONGLY SUPPORT DETENTE AND IMPROVED SOVIET-CONFIDENTIAL

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U.S. RELATIONS. SMOLE SAW THIS AS A SOVIET RESPONSE TO MINIC'S PRESENTATION.

3. HORN OF AFRICA. IN DISCUSSING THIS ISSUE, MINIC ATTEMPTED TO CONVEY TO THE SOVIETS U.S. CONCERN, WHICH HE SAID WAS SUPPORTED BY YUGOSLAVIA, WHICH IS UNEASY OVER CUBAN TROOP PRESENCE IN AFRICA AS A WHOLE AND (TO A LESSER DEGREE) BY SOVIET TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA. ACCORDING TO SMOLE, TITO WAS "FURIOUS" WITH THE CUBANS, WHO HAD ASSURED HIM (AS HAD THE ETHIOPIANS) THAT THERE ARE NO CUBAN TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA, JUST SPECIALISTS AND ADVISORS. TITO HAD PASSED THIS ASSURANCE ON TO THE PRESIDENT AND HAD REPEATED IT ON AMERICAN TELEVISION AND WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN WHEN HE RETURNED TO YUGOSLAVIA THAT THE CUBAN NEWSPAPER GRANMA HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THE CUBAN TROOP PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA.

4. THE SOVIETS HAD SAID LITTLE ABOUT THE CUBAN PRESENCE IN AFRICA AND THE YUGOSLAVS CONCLUDED THAT MOSCOW IS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE LARGE CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE THERE. THE SOVIETS ASSURED THE YUGOSLAVS THAT THE WEST HAS GROSSLY EXAGGERATED THE MAGNITUDE OF THE SOVIET

PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA (CITING AS PARTICULAR "NONSENSE" REPORTS THAT SOV GENERAL OFFICERS ARE PLAYING COMMAND ROLE) AND THAT THE ONLY SOVIETS IN THAT COUNTRY ARE ADVISORS. THE YUGOSLAVS ARGUED STRONGLY FOR A POLITICAL RATHER THAN A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE ETHIOPIAN QUESTION. THE IMPRESSION CARRIED AWAY BY THE YUGOSLAV DELEGATION WAS THAT THE SOVIETS UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA VERY POORLY, AND HARDLY ARE ABLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 06362  
EXDIS

THE OGADEN AND ERITREA. THE YUGOSLAVS WERE VERY DEPRESSED BY THIS. FINALLY, THE SOVIETS TOLD THE YUGOSLAVS THAT THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF ENCOURAGING THE ETHIOPIANS TO CROSS THE BORDER INTO SOMALIA AND HAVE RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM MENGISTU THAT ETHIOPIA DOES NOT INTEND TO CROSS INTO SOMALIA.

5. MIDDLE EAST. MINIC ALSO CONVEYED USG CONCERN OVER THE M.E. SITUATION. THE YUGOSLAVS ATTEMPTED TO CONVINCE THE SOVIETS TO ACCEPT THE WALDHEIM PROPOSAL FOR TALKS IN NEW YORK, EMPHASIZING THEIR CONCERN OVER THE IMPASSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE SOVIETS DID NOT RESPOND TO THIS URGING.

6. SSOD. THE YUGOSLAVS TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT THE SSOD, TELLING THE SOVIETS THAT PRESIDENT CARTER, GISCARD, SCHMIDT AND POSSIBLY TITO (IF HIS PRESENCE IS JUDGED TO BE USEFUL) WILL BE COMING TO NEW YORK FOR THIS SESSION. BREZHNEV GAVE NO INDICATION ABOUT HIS POSSIBLE ATTENDANCE. THE YUGOSLAVS FEEL THAT THE ISSUE HAS YET TO BE DECIDED, AND ACCORDING TO SMOLE GROMYKO SAID AS MUCH. SMOLE REMARKED THAT THE SEED HAS BEEN PLANTED AND IT MAY BEAR FRUIT.

7. HEALTH OF BREZHNEV AND GROMYKO. MINIC MET FOR TWO HOURS AND FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH BREZHNEV (WITH GROMYKO)  
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AND BLATOV IN ATTENDANCE) AND MET FOR THREE HOURS WITH GROMYKO. BREZHNEV WAS IN GOOD FORM, READING FROM A SIX-PAGE STATEMENT WITH HIS USUAL SPEECH DIFFICULTIES AND ALSO EXTEMPORIZING ABOUT 60 PERCENT OF THE TIME. HIS ATTENTION SPAN SEEMED GOOD. GROMYKO WAS QUITE FEEBLE, ALTHOUGH HE WAS MENTALLY VERY ALERT. GROMYKO'S DOCTORS HAD ADVISED THAT HE NOT PARTICIPATE IN THESE MEETINGS AND SMOLE SAID THAT HE IS RECOVERING VERY SLOWLY.

8. SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS. SMOLE CLAIMED THAT THIS TOPIC WAS NOT DISCUSSED SINCE RELATIONS ARE IN GOOD SHAPE. MINISTER OF CULTURE DEMICHEV IS TO GO TO BELGRADE APRIL 10-17, WHICH THE YUGOSLAVS SEE AS SIGNIFICANT. RUSAKOV HAS BEEN INVITED TO VISIT BELGRADE AND WILL GO SOME TIME AFTER DEMICHEV.

9. CODEL PRICE. GROMYKO TOLD THE YUGOSLAVS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE VERY DISSATISFIED WITH THE MEETINGS THAT MEMBERS OF THE CODEL HAD WITH REFUSENIKS AND DISSIDENTS. HE CALLED THIS "PROVINCIAL" AND SAID THAT IT WAS NOT CALCULATED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. SMOLE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO CRITICISM IMPLIED OF THE EMBASSY OR OF THE AMBASSADOR. TOON

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